

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 196365
ORIGIN ARA-14

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY PANAMA PRIORITY RULPALJ
USCINCSO PRIORITY

UNCLAS STATE 196365

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PN, PBOR, (KISSINGER, HENRY A.)

SUBJECT: ENDORSEMENT OF PANAMA CANAL TREATIES BY FORMER
SECRETARY KISSINGER

1. THE FOLLOWING STATEMENT WAS ISSUED YESTERDAY BY FORMER
SECRETARY OF STATE HENRY A. KISSINGER:

I HAVE NOW BEEN BRIEFED IN GREAT DETAIL BY AMBASSADOR
BUNKER AND BY CHIEF OF STAFF OF THE UNITED STATES AIR
FORCE GENERAL JONES, ON BEHALF OF THE JOINT CHIEFS OF
STAFF, GENERAL BROWN, ABOUT THE DETAILS OF THE PANAMA
CANAL TREATY THAT HAS RECENTLY BEEN NEGOTIATED. ON THE
BASIS OF THESE BRIEFINGS I WISH TO EXPRESS MY STRONG VIEW
THAT THE NEW TREATY IS IN THE NATIONAL INTEREST OF THE
UNITED STATES. THE TREATY EMBODIES THE CONVICTION SHARED
BY THE LAST FOUR PRESIDENTS, OF BOTH POLITICAL PARTIES,
THAT A NEW ARRANGEMENT WORKED OUT COOPERATIVELY BETWEEN
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PAGE 02 STATE 196365

THE UNITED STATES AND PANAMA IS THE BEST MEANS OF
GUARANTEEING OUR VITAL INTEREST IN THE FREE, OPEN, AND
SECURE OPERATION OF THE CANAL. IT REFLECTS THE
PRINCIPLES SIGNED BY THE US AND PANAMA IN THE PRESENCE OF
A BIPARTISAN CONGRESSIONAL DELEGATION IN 1974.

-- THE NEW TREATY PRESERVES FOR THE REST OF THIS

CENTURY THE SIGNIFICANT ELEMENTS OF THE EXISTING ARRANGEMENT FOR MANAGEMENT AND DEFENSE OF THE CANAL.

-- AFTER THE END OF THIS PERIOD, THE UNITED STATES WILL CONTINUE TO HAVE THE RIGHT TO GUARANTEE THE CANAL'S NEUTRALITY AND IMPARTIAL ACCESS TO IT EVEN WHILE ITS MANAGEMENT HAS BEEN TURNED OVER TO PANAMA.

THE NEW TREATY MARKS AN IMPROVEMENT OVER THE PRESENT SITUATION IN THAT IT ASSURES CONTINUING, EFFICIENT, NON-DISCRIMINATORY AND SECURE ACCESS TO THE PANAMA CANAL WITH THE SUPPORT OF THE COUNTRIES OF THE WESTERN HEMISPHERE INSTEAD OF AGAINST THEIR OPPOSITION AND EVENTUALLY THEIR HARRASMENT. WHILE THE UNITED STATES WOULD HAVE THE MEANS IN ANY CASE TO DEFEND THE CANAL UNILATERALLY, IT WOULD HAVE TO DO SO UNDER DIFFICULT CIRCUMSTANCES. NEEDLESS TO SAY, WERE THE REGIME OF NEUTRALITY ESTABLISHED BY THIS TREATY TO BE CHALLENGED IN THE FUTURE, THE UNITED STATES WOULD HAVE THE RIGHT AS WELL AS THE DUTY TO DEFEND ITS VITAL INTERESTS IN THE FREE, NEUTRAL AND UNIMPEDED ACCESS THROUGH THE CANAL. THE NEW TREATY, FREELY NEGOTIATED WITH THE SUPPORT OF THE HEMISPHERE NATIONS, WOULD ENABLE IT TO DO SO UNDER MORE FAVORABLE INTERNATIONAL CONDITIONS THAN EXIST TODAY.

THE NEW ARRANGEMENT, COOPERATIVELY ARRIVED AT, MAKES UNCLASSIFIED

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PAGE 03 STATE 196365

THE EFFICIENT AND NEUTRAL OPERATION OF THE PANAMA CANAL A JOINT COMMITMENT WITH THE BROAD SUPPORT OF THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY. IT IS THE ESSENTIAL FOUNDATION OF A LONG-TERM RELATIONSHIP OF FRIENDSHIP AND COOPERATION WITH THE NATIONS OF THE WESTERN HEMISPHERE. IT ENHANCES OUR SECURITY AND RAISES NEW PROSPECTS FOR A PEACEFUL AND CONSTRUCTIVE INTERNATIONAL ORDER.

THIS TREATY, SOUGHT BY FOUR ADMINISTRATIONS OVER A PERIOD OF 13 YEARS, ADVANCES FUNDAMENTAL NATIONAL PURPOSES. SUPPORT FOR IT IS REQUIRED BY STATESMANSHIP PATRIOTISM AND WISDOM. I THEREFORE SUPPORT SENATE RATIFICATION. VANCE

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Sent Date: 18-Aug-1977 12:00:00 am
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Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
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